



PRESS RELEASE
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Alaska Advisory Committee to the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights Releases Findings on Alaska Native Voting Rights

The Alaska Advisory Committee to the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights has issued an Advisory [Memorandum](#) on Native Alaska voting rights, with important findings and actionable recommendations for improving full access to voting for this population. Through a series of public [panels](#), the Committee reviewed the implementation of the [Toyukak v. Treadwell](#) settlement and court order that outlined steps the state must take to provide voting materials to Alaska Native voters. In addition, the Committee examined the potential impact of mail-in voting. The Memorandum will provide state-level input to the Commission's 2018 Statutory Enforcement Report on voting rights in the U.S.

In August 2017, the Committee heard testimony from community members, advocates, academics, legal professionals, and government officials. The Committee identified a number of concerns, including: translated written materials required under *Toyukak v. Treadwell* were unavailable in numerous polling locations; inadequate staffing of bilingual poll workers; slow mail delivery in rural areas would create a challenge to effective implementation of a vote-by-mail system; and election officials have not yet determined how to directly distribute ballots and translated election pamphlets to households in need of them. In an effort to help remedy these concerns, the Committee developed recommendations directed to the U.S. Department of Justice, U.S. Postal Service, Governor's office, Alaska Legislature, Division of Elections, and the state's Congressional delegation.

The Committee continues to examine Alaska Native voting rights and will release a full report in the next fiscal year.

Committee Chair Natalie Landreth said, "The Committee recognizes that voting is the foundational right in our democracy and it is our hope that the recommendations included in this memorandum preserve and expand the right to vote for every eligible citizen, especially Alaska Natives."

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The U.S. Commission on Civil Rights, established by the Civil Rights Act of 1957, is the only independent, bipartisan agency charged with advising the President and Congress on civil rights and reporting annually on federal civil rights enforcement. Our 51 state Advisory Committees offer a broad perspective on civil rights concerns at state and local levels. The Commission: in our 7th decade, a continuing legacy of influence in civil rights. For information about the Commission, please visit <http://www.usccr.gov> and follow us on [Twitter](#) and [Facebook](#).